Chapter-II
This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section deals with a brief introduction to Hinduism and origin of Saivism in brief and Saiva symbols that appeared on the coins of Vijayanagara rulers. The second section discusses about the Vaishnavism and Vaishnava gods and goddesses engraved on the coins.

**Hinduism**

Hinduism has been the faith of millions since the days of the Vedas. Scholars in various ways have interpreted the name Hindu, but the real meaning is Him (i.e., Himsa or violence), du (du, for ‘from’). It means people who keep away from violence.

The Hindus have been praying since ages for peace and prosperity of all the worlds. The rituals and rites, ceremonies and vows prescribed in Hinduism are all directed to the promotion of the well-being of all the worlds. (*Samastha-loka-sukhino-bhavanthu*).

The *Vedas* have been identified, from time immemorial, as the fountainhead of all Hindu culture. The Hindus have a treasure house of knowledge in the form of four *Vedas*, viz. *Rigveda*, *Yajurveda*, *Samaveda* and *Atharvanaveda*. The *Rigveda*, *Yajurveda* and *Samaveda* deal with gods and sacrifices, the *Atharvanaveda* deal with man, his protection from harmful adversaries, welfare in life and similar aspects. The end of the *Vedas* contain philosophical preaching’s called the *Upanishads* or *Vedanta*. Vedic religion was one of the aspects of *Vedic* civilization which include ideals, society, education, economic life, languages and literature, arts and philosophy, medical sciences, polity and other sciences. The purpose of human life in *Vedic* civilization is narrated in the *Puranas* as the four *purusharthas*, namely dharma, artha, kama and moksha. Vedic religion was a guiding principle for the conduct of individual life. The entire *Vedic* literature may be cited as primary sources of dharma. There were further interpretations of this literature called *Smritis*.

The fundamentals of *Vedic* religion comprise certain unshakable beliefs. They include belief in divine power endowed in different gods and goddess as Brahma as Creator, Vishnu as Protector Siva as Extinguisher of the universe, besides the goddess Sarasvati, Lakshmi, Parvati, Lalitha, Sun, Moon, Ganapati, Kumara, and deified spirits dwelling in rivers, hills, fire, water and earth and so on. In fact, there is no object in the
universe which is not permeated by the Divine. “Isa vasyam Idam Sarvam”. The subordinate gods Indra, Agni, Yama, Varuna, Vayu, Kubera and the host of others are invoked in sacrifices and other rituals. The dharmasastras particularly the Puranas, Ramayana, Mahabharata, laid down some beliefs like belief in virtue (punya) and sin (papa) belief in rebirth, performance of timely rituals for departed souls (pitrs) and family deities.

Agamas like Saiva, Vaishnava and Sakhya literature deal with the divinities and types of worship, temple architecture, iconography, sculpture, auspicious occasions, material for worship etc. These works are also known as tantrasastras and they prescribe the mode of installation of the respective deities in temples with specific yantras and mantras. The Agamas formed basis for the development of bhakti or devotional practices including fine arts like music, dance and political aesthetic expressions.

South India witnessed great heights in political and cultural fields which it had not witnessed earlier and hence the Vijayanagara period is referred to as the ‘golden age of South Indian history’. This appellation is justified on the basis of the rich variety of gold coins which were issued by the kings of this dynasty. Majority of the historians have agreed that the aim and purpose of the foundation of this Empire was to bring back the glory of Hinduism and Hindu dharma.

During the Vijayanagara period, sage Vidyaranya revived the lost glory of the Vedic and Puranic religion which suffered a lot, almost to the point of extinction, as a result of repeated Muslim invasions over the southern kingdoms. As the guru or teacher of the Sangama brothers Harihara I and Bukkaraya I, he inspired them to establish a new kingdom first at Anagondi and later at Vijayanagara in 1336 A.D. In a short period it grew into a mighty empire, which lasted more than three centuries under the patronage of great rulers, viz. two Harihararayas, two Bukkarayas, two Devarayas, two Narasimharayas, Krishnadevaraya, Achyutadevaraya, Sadasivaraya, Venkatapathiraya and others. The VedicPuranic religion flourished in all its aspects and Vedic studies, rituals, art, architecture, regional languages, literature, fine arts, ayurveda, the philosophical ponderings as contemplated by the sage Vidyaranya all thrived. Vidyaranya initiated a
great project for writing the bhashyas (commentaries) on the four Vedas, viz., the Rigveda, Yajurveda, Samaveda and Atharvanaveda.

Vidyaranya invited eminent scholars in the Vedas and Sastras from all over the country by offering them agraharas or villages as grants. In the Kraku grant of Harihara II dated A.D., 1376 it is mentioned that one agrahara was given to 63 Brahmans well versed in the Vedas and Sastras including Jyotisha and Ayurveda. The gift village is situated in Pakanadu² (present Ongole-Nellore border region near Kavali) An inscription at Srisailam refers to Harihara II with the titles, Rajavyasa, rajavalmiki, and states that he composed the Vedabhashya to be written³ and he also supported the Saiva and Vaishnava creeds alike.

Harihara II granted villages to the scholars, who helped the sage Vidyaranya in writing the commentaries or Bhasyas on the Vedas⁴. Vidyaranya and Sainacharya wrote some books on “Parasara Smriti called Parasara Madhaviya rayaschitta Sudhanidhi Yajnatantra Sudhanidhi”.

All Dharmasastras, Agamas, Puranas, Itihasas and a major part of the Kavya literature, directly or indirectly, preached Vedicdharma. During the Vijayanagara period the sacrificial dharma was intended for Vedic scholars and household rituals took first place for the common man visiting temples and undertaking pilgrimages, enjoying entertainment through folk art, participating in academic activities etc. which played a large role in propagating Vedic religion among the people of all classes, in an Agamic way.

The religious conditions of the period were such that it gave an opportunity for all religions to thrive on their own accord without hindering the promotions of other religions. Saivism and Vaishnavism, the two major religions of south India which had uneasy relations in the earlier period, now flourished side by side. Grants to Saiva and Vaishnava temples were given alike. Some rulers were more inclined towards Virasaivism of Basavanna. We do not hear of any quarrels between the followers of this faith and other. The only religious misunderstanding during this period was between Jainas and Srivaishnavas but it was amicably settled by Bukkaraya I.
Another important factor was the harmonious development of the three schools of Vedanta, viz. Advaita, Dvaita and Visistadvaita during the period. Vidyaranya of the Advaitamatha of Sringeri, Madhvacharya of Dvaitamatha and Vedanta Desika of the Visistadvaita received equal respect and regard from Vijayanagara rulers though Vidyaranya was the spiritual leader of the foundation of the Vijayanagara Empire. Tolerance of different schools of spirituals thoughts was reflected in the coinage of the period.

Section I

Coins are one of the prime materials, apart from sculptures, to know the religious history of a region. The Vijayanagara coins were intact even today because of the symbols of gods and goddesses. The sculptures representing various gods and goddesses and the symbols of worship on the walls and in the pillars temples of Vijayanagara period certainly helps us to know the religious history of the period.

SAIVISM

Hinduism is distinctly different from other religions because of holding an incomparable form of Monism in accompaniment with the idea of other deities as subordinate to the non-dual Supreme Spirit. Every cult of the Hindus gives a particular name to this Supreme Spirit, holding all other gods and goddesses as His or Her agents. Saivism is the religion of such a cult which holds Lord Siva as the Supreme Spirit, pervading the entire universe with His bigger form.

Saivism, or the worship of the god Siva, was an important cult which claimed a large number of adherents among the people in ancient India. Unfortunately, the history of this cult from pre-historic times down to the early centuries of Christian era is somewhat obscure.

The origin of this cult can be traced to hoary antiquity. The archaeological remains unearthed at the pre-historic sites of the Indus valley prove the prevalence of this cult among the pre-Aryan people of India. Almost all the qualities that have been attributed to Siva in the later ages are found in nucleus form in the seals and objects discovered there.
The people of Mohenjadaro worshipped a male deity who may be regarded as the prototype of Siva. He is represented as seated in a yoga posture, surrounded by animals, and as bearing three visible faces with two horns on two sides of a tall head-dress.

Numismatic evidence discloses that the indigenous and foreign rulers who flourished in the pre-Christian and in the early centuries of the Christian era were staunch supporters of this cult. J. Marshall, in course of his excavations at Sirkap site (Taxila), unearthed a bronze seal of the first century B.C. The seal contains the figure Siva and the legend ‘Sivaraksitasa’ in Brahmi and devout follower of Siva as his name ‘one protected by Siva’ alone would suffice to indicate. The Bull as Siva’s symbol is represented on some of the early Yaudheya and Arjunayana coins, while the trident (trisula) is depicted on the coins of Rudragupta, the Panchala king.

Worship of Siva in Linga form appears on the coins of early un-inscribed cost coin issued from the Gangetic plain. Cunningham and Allan attributed this coin as a linga erected on a pedestal. The anthropomorphic motif of Siva appeared on the copper coins of Kuninda for the first time. These coins depict the standing Siva facing holding trident with axe in his right hand and the left hand is on the hip with pouch of coins, hanging on the obverse and a deer standing to the left. On Ujjaini coin, a three headed standing figure is depicted with club in the right hand. According to J. N. Banerjea this is the earliest iconographic representation of three headed Siva.

The most interesting icon of Siva, along with bull standing behind, is depicted on the gold coin of the Kushana king Wima Kadphises, Kanishka and Huvishka, the successors of Wima Kadphises also issued coin, with standing Siva along with all his attributes.

Saivism and its different sub-sects were fully developed by the beginning of the Gupta period and Siva images and various Saiva symbols were objects of worship. The early rulers of the Imperial Gupta dynasty were generally ardent devotees of Vishnu, but at least one later member of the family, i.e. Vinayagupta to judge from the evidence of the Gunaighar copper plate grant, was a devotee of Siva.
During the Vijayanagara period significant changes accrued in the fortunes of Saiva sects. Bhikshavrithi matha was the sole institution which influenced the rulers of Karnataka and Andhra. The inscriptions from A.D. 1320 onward at Vutukuru, Tripuranthakam, Basireddi Palli, Pushpagiri, Rayalacheruvu and Pedda Mudiyam etc. (A. D. 1551) refers to the dominance of Virasaivas. These inscriptions refer to the Acharyas, Shaddarsana Sthapanacharya Virasaiva Siddha Bhikshavrithi ayyavaru at Vutukuru, and Aghorasivacharya Ayyavaru at Somireddi Palli (A. D. 1403). The kingdoms of Gutti and Gandikota were principal areas of influence.

The presence of the kriyasakti order in the Gandikota and Gutti kingdoms during the Vijayanagara period was a new development. The Matha of the kriyasaktis was located at Hampi during the Vijayanagara period and its senior priests acted as gurus to the Vijayanagara royals, wielding great influence in the propagation of the Saiva faith. Chandrabhushana kriyasakti, one such guru of the royal family, was the recipient of the agrahara of Konduru village in Mulkinadu, and he reallocated this agrahara to his disciple in A. D. 1371.

Bhiskhavrithi matha reached as far as Nargunur in Karimnagar to Sri Kalahasti in South. The patronage to the Sri Kalahastisvara temple by the rulers of Vijayanagara especially by Krishnadevaraya, Achyutaraya and Sadasivaraya was held in high esteem. With the lavish gifts of these benevolent kings, the temple undoubtedly reached its height of glory. The very fact that Achyutaraya chose Sri Kalahasti for celebrating his coronation shows his reverence towards the deity Sri Kalahastisvara.

The presence of Virasaivas at Srisailam is noticed on the prakara or compound wall of the Mallikarjuna temple at Srisailam which came into existence during Krishnadevaraya period. The narrative panels portray Basavesvara, Ekanataramaiah, Kinnerah Brahmayya, Madivala Macharya, Akka Mahadevi, etc. The presence of the Virasaivas at Srisailam and in Andhra was a notable dimension in the religious scene of the Vijayanagara period. They also patronised the Pasupatas, Kalamukhas, Sakta, Siddha and Tantric cults. The Bhairava temple at Mopuru in Kadapa district, datable to the late thirteenth century A. D., must have been a nodal point for the Kapalikas during Vijayanagara period.
The above references show how the rulers of Vijayanagara patronised Saivism. This is also reflected on their coinage. In the year 1976, some Vijayanagara gold coins were found in a pot in the Chinnachowk village of Kadapa district.

The different types of coins are found in this hoard bearing the gods and goddesses like Uma-Maheswara, Balakrishna, Lakshmi-Narayana and Lord Venkateswara which were issued by Sri Pratapa Harihara, Krishnadevaraya, Sadasivaraya and Sri Rangaraya I.

**SIVA PARVATHI TYPE**

Siva Parvathi or Uma-Maheswara types of coins are generally represented Lord Siva and Parvathi. These types of coins were issued by Harihara II, Devaraya I, Devaraya II, Krishnadevaraya and Sadasivaraya. Lord Siva first appeared on the coins of Harihara II. Lord Siva as Virupaksha the Lord with the terrible eye was the patron deity of all the Vijayanagara rulers. This type of coins were issued in three metals i.e., gold, silver and copper.

**Gold coins**

These types of Gold coins were issued by Harihara II, Devaraya I, Krishnadevaraya, and Sadasivaraya.

Harihara II, the Sangama ruler, issued Siva Parvathi type of gold coins with slight variations. On some of the gold coins, on the obverse side Siva is shown seated in *padmasana* on lotus with goddess Parvathi on the left lap. Both of them are wearing *kiritas* and other ornaments. Siva is shown with four arms. One of the left hands he holds the trident while the other hand is around his consort waist, one of the right hands (upper right hand) he holds the *damaru* while the other lower right hand is in the *abhayamudra*, the symbolic of promising prosperity and protection to all. Head of Lord ‘Siva’s above the
head are the Sun and Moon, probably the symbols of the desire that the empire should last till the Sun and Moon lasted.

A slight variation is found on some other coins of Harihara II. In this case the right hand of the God holds parasu on the battle axe in place of Damaruka. on a single coin of half Pagoda type issued by Harihara II at Kadapa taluk also figures Siva Parvathi symbol.

Devaraya I was the next ruler who issued Siva Parvathi type of gold coins. Three hundred and eight gold coins issued by Devaraya I of Uma-Maheswara type are in the Hyderabad museum. On the obverse of the first type coins the god and goddess are shown seated in padmasana posture. Lord Siva is represented with four hands holding Parasu and Damaruka in two hands, keeping the rest of the hands in Abhayamudra and in the embracing posture of the goddess. Both Siva and Parvathi are shown wearing kiritas. In the second type Lord Siva and Parvathi are shown with archaic dress and ornaments. Siva is shown holding a Parasu in his right hand and aMriga in his left hand.

Krishnadevaraya of Tuluva dynasty issued Siva Parvati type of coins. His coins also are similar to the coins of the Harihara II, except Lord Siva and goddess Parvati are seated on raised pedestal. The goddess Parvati is shown with two hands normally kept in the act of affectionate gesture to Lord Siva. Both the god and goddess are well adorned with kiritas and archaic dress and ornaments.

Sadasivaraya was the next ruler who issued Siva Parvati type of coins. On the obverse of the coin is shown Lord Siva with his consort Parvati seated on a raised pedestal. Both the deities wear kiritas and ornaments. Siva holds a damaru in his right hand.
Silver coins

Silver coins were issued by Harihara II and Devaraya I.

Harihara II coin, on the obverse side, shows Siva and Parvati seated. Goddess has folded her hands in *anjali* posture. Devaraya I was the next ruler who issued Siva Parvati coins. His coins are similar to those issued by Harihara II.

Copper coins

These types of coins were issued by Devaraya II. On the obverse of the coin is depicted the figures of Siva and Parvati seated on a raised *pedestal*. Parvati has folded her hands in *anjali* posture.

A careful study of the above coin types of Siva Parvathi enable to draw the following conclusion. The god and goddess are shown in a sitting posture. The goddess Parvati is seated on the left thigh of the Lord Siva. Both are well adorned with *kiritas*. On all the issues the Lord Siva is represented with four hands; *Trisula* and *Damaru* are the attributes shown normally in the hands of the Siva. It is observed that one of the hands is invariably kept in *abhayamudra*, while the other is in an act of embracing the goddess. The goddess is shown with two hands normally kept in the act of adoring her Lord. On the most of the coins the Sun and Moon are represented on either side of the head of the Lord. These coins exhibit considerable artistic skill in the representation of the deities. In modelling, in posture and in anatomic details they are pleasing and charming.
Section II

Vaishnavism

Vaishnavism is one of the major branches of Hinduism along with Saivism, Smartism, and Shaktism. It is focused on the veneration of Vishnu. Vishnu is original and supreme god among the gods and is known by other names called as Narayana and Vasudeva, Krishna. Vaishnavites are the followers of the supreme Lord Vishnu. A large percentage of Hindus are Vaishnavas, with the vast majority living in India. They lead a way of life promoting differentiated monotheism, which gives importance to Lord Vishnu and his ten incarnations.

As there is no single founder, the worship of Vishnu cannot be reliably shown to have begun at any fixed date in the past. Vishnu is the deity worshipped in the Vedas and their scriptural adjuncts, according to Vaishnavas. He is the supreme Lord, and is the only entity primarily praised in all true scriptures. Vishnu is the Lord, is the cause, the protector, and the destroyer of all creation known and unknown, and is responsible for all bondage and liberation. He is beyond the scope of all that is evanescent and eternal and his worship is the purpose of one’s existence. He is free of all flaws, and has an infinite number of good attributes.

It is not definitely known when the Vaishnava religion began to be followed by the Vijayanagara royals. According to the prapannamritam of Ananthacharya, a celebrated Vaishnava work, king Virupaksha was the first Vijayanagara ruler who embraced to Vaishnavism. Though his predecessors were staunch followers of Saivism they followed a policy of religious tolerance towards Vaishnavism. Consequently a number of Vaishnava temples were raised and grants of land, gifts in cash and kind were made by sub-ordinate, officers and private individuals long before Vaishnavism was adopted by the sovereigns.

The Vaishnavas of this period belonged to two classes viz., the Vaishnavas or the followers of Ramanuja, and the Madhavas or the followers of Madhava. Culturally broad-minded Sangama rulers, in spite of their adoption of Saivism, made some grants to Vaishnava temples at Tirumala and other places. The donations or grants were made by the
subordinates, chiefs, officers and Vaishnava Acharyas and few by the kings during the Sangama period.

Virupaksha II, the last king of the Sangama dynasty, was converted to *Vaishnavism* by Ettur Narasimhacarya. The ground was set ready for the acceptance of *Vaishnavism* in the Vijayanagara Empire from below, before it came from above.

Then the Empire was ruled by the kings of Saluva family. Saluva Narasimha, gave a great impetus to the expansion of Vaishnavism. Mangideva, the ancestor of Saluva Narasimha played an important role in the restoration of the image of Lord Sri Ranganatha to his original abode in Sri Rangam. From that time the Saluvas came under the influence of Vaishnavism. Mangideva was a devotee of Lord Venkateswara and he got the *Vimanam* and *Sikharam* of Tirumala temple guilded in 1359. *Saluvabhyudayam* of Rajanatha Dindima refers to a crown presented by Saluva Narasimha during his visit to Tirumala. He also installed an image of Sri Lakshmi Narasimhaswamy on the path-way leading to Tirumalai hill. He also built Ramanujakutams (Free feeding houses for Vaishnavas) and made Kandadai Ramanuja Ayyangar as in-charge of these feeding houses. Ayyangar played an important role in the religious activities of the king at Tirumala and Srirangam. Saluva Narasimha appointed Ayyangar as the casteror guardian of the gold treasury of the temple at Tirupati.

The founder of the Tuluva dynasty, Narasa Nayaka and his successors were devotees of Vishnu and patronised Vaishnavism. Narasimha, a son of Narasa Nayaka, was a stanch Vaishnavaite. He was a disciple of *Srimadvedamarga* Pratishthapanacharya and *abhayaVedanthapravarthaka* Peddacharya of Tatacharya. An inscription from Bukkapatnam refers to Vira Narasimha’s gift of that village to his guru in 1508 A.D.

Krishnadevaraya, a son of Narasa Nayaka, was an ardent *Vaishnava*. He made rich and numerous grants to *Vaishnava* temples. One of the renowned constructions of Krishnadevaraya in the city of Vijayanagara was the Krishnaswamy temple. After his conquest of Udayagiri fort, he carried away from that place the image of Krishna to his capital and enshrined it in a temple raised for that purpose in 1515 A.D. The triumph of *Vaishnavism* in that city as well as in the Vijayanagara Empire is significant with the
construction of this temple. He also constructed the Hazara Rama temple at Hampi and made some addition to the Vitthala Swami temple which is stated to be the most ornate of all religious edifices in the Vijayanagara Empire. Krishnadevaraya installed a monolithic statue of the god Nrisimha, hewn out of a single boulder in 1528 A.D. and enshrined it within a walled enclosure in the capital. Sri Varadaraja temple at Kanchipuram was also improved.

Krishnadevaraya was an ardent worshiper of Lord Venkateswara who was his patron deity. He visited the temple at Tirumala seven times between 1513 A.D., and 1521 A.D., and offered rich gifts. His Queens Tirumaladevi and Chinnadevi also gifted valuable presents and provided daily offerings to the Lord at Tirumala. The royalty, subordinates, officers and Vaishnava Acharyas lavishly made donations to the temple and it shows the popularity of Vaishnavism and Tirumala as the premier Vaishnava centre.

Krishnadevaraya also made grants to other Vaishnava centres like Ahobala Nrisimhasvami at Ahobalam, Srikakuleswara temple at Srikakulam, and Simhachalam.

Achyutaraya, the successors of Krishnadevaraya, also was an ardent Vaishnava and made gifts to Vittala temple at Vijayanagara it was the Svarnakshara or earth of gold. He was a staunch worshipper of Lord Venkateswara and visited the temple twice. He also made gifts to other Vaishnava temples at Lepakshi and Melavoy.

With the advent of the Aravidu dynasty, Vaishnavism gained much importance. The emperors like Tirumalaraya were a staunch devotee of Vishnu. His Penanguluru grant dubshim ‘a repository of nectar like devotion to Hari’, which is another name for Vishnu. He also made a number of grants to Vaishnva temples and issued coins bearing Vaishnava symbols. Sri Rangaraya, the son of Tirumalaraya, who ruled between 1572-1585 A. D., was also an ardent Vaishnava and restored worship in the Ahobalam temple by driving away the Muslim forces.

Sadasivaraya also was an ardent devotee of Vishnu. He makes clear in one of his grants dated 1558 A. D. that death to him meant the attainment of a place in Vaikunta, the mythical heaven ruled by Vishnu. Vaishnavism gained a stronger hold during his reign. He donated 31 villages to the Ramanuja kutam at Sri Perumbudur for its maintenance and
to carry on the regular worship of Vishnu. Princes preceptors also played an important role in the spread of *Vaishnavism*, to name a few Kandadai Srirangacharya and prince Kondaraja.

Venkatapathiraya II was a staunch devotee of Sri Venkateswara. His copper statue with folded hands and clasped palms in the Tirumala temple stands as a memorial of his devotion. His fervent devotion to Vishnu made him introduce some innovations in the mode of issuing of royal grants. It is reflected in his coins and patronage of temples.

Hitherto the emperors of Vijayanagara from the beginning adopted the practice of inscribing invocations to both Siva and Vishnu at the beginning of their grants and signing them in the end with Sri Virupaksha, the name of the guardian deity of the Aravidu kingdom. Venkatapatiraya II broke this tradition and at the beginning of his grants we find more signs of the *Vaishnava* faith. The above points clearly show how the rulers of Vijayanagara patronised *Vaishnavism*.

Now coming to the coins relating to *Vaishnavism* or Vishnu, for the first time the iconography Vishnu is noticed on the copper coins of Vishnumithra from Panchala can be dated to 1st century B.C. The reverse side of this coin has a standing deity of Vishnu depicted with wheel. Further, a silver drachmas issued by the Indo Greek governor most clearly depicts the iconography of Krishna with his brother Balarama on the obverse and reverse respectively. The style and the dress seen on the Panchala coin is more close to the sculpture found in Mathura which belong to the Kushana period.

During the Vijayanagara rule, the currency system of the region saw a new trend. After the Gupta dynasty, the Rayas of Vijayanagara were the first to issue gold coins in large numbers and denominations, though the gold used was a base quality. They also issued silver and copper coins for business and day-to-day transactions.

The *Vaishnava* symbols on coins and the same as represented in sculpture is discussed in detail.
HANUMAN TYPE

Hanuman is a Hindu deity, who was an ardent devotee of Lord Rama. He is a central character in the Indian epic *Ramayana*. He also finds mentioned in several other texts, including *Mahabharata*, the various *Puranas* and Jain texts. Hanuman participated in the fought between Sri Rama and the demon king Ravana. Hanuman type of coins were issued by Harihara I, Bukkaraya I, Harihara II, Devaraya I, Sri Rangaraya I, Venkatapathiraya I, Venkatapathiraya II, and Venkatapathiraya III. These coins were minted in gold, silver and copper metals.

Gold coins

Hanuman type of coins were issued by Harihara I, Bukkaraya I, and Harihara II.

![Image of gold coin]

On the obverse of the coin is shown Hanuman moving to the right with knees bent, the left hand resting on the left knee and the right hand raised up, the tail is lifted up behind the head and the face looking forward. A dagger in the back, Hanuman is clothed. One of the main characteristic features is the fold of clothing that hangs down in a ‘V’ shape between the legs. Bukkaraya I and Harihara II coins are similar to these coins. These features are also reflected on the temple walls of Hazara Rama at Hampi.

Silver coin

Silver type of coins were issued by Harihara I, Bukkaraya I and Devaraya I. These types of coins are similar to the gold coins.

Copper coins

Copper coins were issued by Harihara I, Bukkaraya I, Sri Rangaraya I, Venkatapathiraya I, Venkatapathiraya II and Venkatapathiraya III.
On the obverse side of coins issued by Hari hara I, Hanuman is shown facing to right with uplifted tail and his both the hands half raised, surrounded by a circular line\textsuperscript{49}.

On the obverse side of coins issue by Bukkaraya I, Hanuman is shown moving to right. The tail is raised up and curling above the head. The left leg is raised the right hand is raised up\textsuperscript{50}. These features are also seen with premises of Hazara Rama temple, at Hampi. Coins issued by Sri Rangaraya I\textsuperscript{51} and Venkatapatiraya I\textsuperscript{52}are similar to this type. Coins issued by Venkatapatiraya II have the following distinct features: coin is discussed below.

On the obverse of the coin it is shown that Hanuman is seated in \textit{padmasana} posture on a plain pedestal and the tail is curved near the head. The face is turned to the right. Right hand is in \textit{abhayamudra} posture\textsuperscript{53}. Left hand is raised up. Coins issued by Venkatapathiraya III are found to the similar to these coins except that Hanuman is seated in \textit{sukasana} posture.

It is more probably that Hanuman, one of the most popular deities among the Hindu gods, was chosen by Harihara I with a view to inspire the people with the ideals of determination, diligence, discipline, and dedication to build the Vijayanagara empire. However, the Kadambas were to portray first this deity on their coins. Hanuman depicted
on the coins of Vijayanagara, is a symbol of strength and victory to every Hindu. The figure of Hanuman was also depicted on the coins of Yadavas. The gold coins are called *Hanumantharayi-varahas* as they bear the figure of Hanuman on the obverse side. The god is depicted in his ‘*Vira*’ form, resembling a warrior. The depiction on the coins has close artistic links with contemporary sculptural representation of Hanuman.

**VISHNU TYPE**

Vishnu is a popular Hindu deity. He is the Supreme God of Vaishnavism, one of the three most influential denominations in contemporary Hinduism. Vishnu is also known as Lord Narayana the Supreme God and is also known as Lord Hari. Lord Vishnu is one of the important gods during Vijayanagara period. Vishnu is depicted on both the walls of their temples and their coins. Vishnu type of coins were issued by Harihara I, Krishnadevaraya, Sri Rangaraya I, Venkatapathiraya I and Sri Rangaraya III. All these rulers minted the coins in copper metal only.

Harihara I issued Vishnu type of coin.

On the obverse of the coins issued by Harihara I, it is shown that Vishnu as seated, holding conch and discus in the left and right hands respectively. Coin issued by Krishnadevaraya shows Vishnu seated with four hands. One of the upper right hand has *chakra*, while upper left hand has *sankha*, right lower hand is in *abhayamudra* and left lower hand is in *katihasta*. Coins of Venkatapathiraya I regime are similar to those of Krishnadevaraya coins. Sri Rangaraya I coins are also similar to the Krishnadevaraya coins, except that Vishnu is in a depicted standing posture. Sri Rangaraya III issued Vishnu type of coins with small variations.
The first type of coin, shows Vishnu in Kurmavatara standing posture.

The second type of coin, bears on the obverse the figure of MatsyaAvatar of Vishnu.

Vishnu type of coins are issued by Sangama, Tuluva and Aravidu dynasties of Vijayanagara Empire. Vishnu is the Supreme God of Vaishnavism. The Lord Vishnu is shown either seated or in standing posture. Generally, the Lord Vishnu is represented with four hands; and sankha and chakra are the attributes shown normally in the hands of Vishnu. It is observed that lower right hand is invariably kept in abhaya mudra (gesture of benediction) while the other is in a posture of katihasta.

LAKSHMI TYPE

Lakshmi is said to be the goddess of fortune and luck. Goddess Lakshmi attained full iconographic significance in the epics. She occurs on the obverse of the Satavahana coin of Siri Yajna Satakarni. This tradition was continued by the Vijayanagara rulers also. Lakshmi type of coins were issued by Harihara I and Harihara II, Krishnadevaraya and Tirumalaraya I. These coins were minted in gold and copper metals.

Gold coins

Gold type of coins were issued by Harihara II and Krishnadevaraya. Coins issued by Harihara II show goddess Lakshmi in sitting posture within a circle of dots. Coins of Krishnadevaraya regime depicted goddess Lakshmi in a sitting posture with four hands within a circle of dots.
Copper coins

Copper coins were issued by Harihara I and Tirumalaraya I. Harihara I coin shows the figure of goddess Lakshmi. Who is seated in padmasana holding lotus buds in her two upraised hands\(^6\). Tirumalaraya I coin shows goddess Lakshmi seated in a sukasana posture\(^6\), with a dagger in the right hand.

Evidently, we find the figure of goddess Lakshmi appears on many Vijayanagara coins along with Lord Narayana and Lord Narasimha. But in these coins goddess is shown independently. On all the instances goddess Lakshmi is seen in a sitting posture. According to the Silparatna, it describes that the image of Lakshmi, the chief consort of Lord Vishnu, should have only two arms when she is by the side of Lord Vishnu. However, she is depicted separately she should have four arms and be seated upon a lotus.

LAKSHMI NARAYANA TYPE

These coins have the figures of goddess Lakshmi and Lord Vishnu on the obverse of the coins. Such coins, minted in gold and copper metals, were issued by Harihara II, Devaraya I, Ramachandra, Sadasivaraya and Venkatapathiraya II.

Gold coins

Gold coins were issued by Harihara II, Devaraya I, Ramachandra and Sadasivaraya. In the coin issued by Harihara II, the figure printed below,

We find on the obverse of the coin the figures of the Lord Narayana and Goddess Lakshmi seated in Padmasana posture. The god has four hands. The god carries chakra and sankha in the upper hands and the lower left passes round the back of goddess Lakshmi, and the lower right in abhaya mudra, a benedictory symbol assuring protection to all. Both are shown with kiritas and ornaments. Goddess Lakshmi is shown with two hands. Benedictory symbol the right hand of the goddess holds a lotus while the other is in
Devaraya I is coins are similar to those of Harihara II, except the sun and the moon above the figures. Coins of Ramachandra and Sadasivaraya are also similar to the coins of Harihara II.

**Copper**

Copper coins were issued by Venkatapathiraya II only and these coins are also similar to the gold coins issued by Harihara II.

A study of coins with the figures of Laksam–Narayana reveals that generally goddess Laksam and Lord Vishnu are shown seated besides. The coins give an insight into the head-dress and ornaments worn on ceremonial occasions. The head dress consisted of *kiritas*. Lord Vishnu is depicted with two or four hands in which he holds the *sankha* and *chakra* in the left and right respectively. Lower left hand is thrown around the waist of the goddess, whereas, the lower right hand is invariably in *abhaya mudra* posture. The goddess Laksam is shown holding a lotus in the right hand and the left is in *dolahasta mudra*.

**LAKSHMI NARASIMHA TYPE**

The Narasimha *avatara* is one of the prominent incarnations of the Lord Vishnu. For the first time this deity was depicted on the coins of Hoyasala king Narasimha II. Subsequently, this god appears on the gold coins of Harihara II depicting Laksam and Narasimha seated on a high pedestal. Lord Narasimha is shown either single or with his consort Laksam. These type of coins were issued by Harihara II, Vira Narasimha, Sadasivaraya, Ramadevaraya and Sri Rangaraya III. Such coins were minted in gold and copper metals.

**Gold coins**

This type of coin was issued by Harihara II.
On the obverse of the coin is shown Lord Narasimha\textsuperscript{66} seated on a high pedestal in the \textit{padmasana} posture with his consort goddess Lakshmi seated on his left thigh. Lord Narasimha holds \textit{sudarshanachakra} in the upper right arm, \textit{sankha} in the upper left, keeps the lower right in \textit{abhaya mudra} and passes the lower left round the back of goddess Lakshmi. The god is adorned with \textit{kirita}. The same features are also reflected on the walls of the sculpture Tirumala temple.

\textbf{Copper coins}

These types of coins were issued by Vira Narasimha, Sadasivaraya, Ramadevaraya and Sri Rangaraya III.

Coins issued by Vira Narasimha show Lord Narasimha\textsuperscript{67} as seated in squatting posture. Sadasivaraya\textsuperscript{68} and Ramadevaraya\textsuperscript{69} coins are similar to the coins of Vira Narasimha. Sri Rangaraya’s III coin is shown below.

We find on the obverse of the coin Vira Narasimha\textsuperscript{70} seated on a raised platform with his consort goddess Lakshmi seated on his left lap. God is holding \textit{chakra} in the right, \textit{sankha} in the left hands.

\textbf{BRAHMA SARASWATI TYPE}

The Hindu mythology assigns the role of Creator to Brahma. He is the first member of the orthodox \textit{Brahmanical} trinity, and the \textit{Puranas} give different accounts regarding his origin. In one place it is described as having been born of the Supreme (\textit{Hiranya garbha}) Being. When the later united with energy, Maya, elsewhere it is said, he emanated out of a
golden egg that lay floating on primeval waters. But the most widely accepted version is that he was born out of a lotus that sprung up from the naval of Lord Vishnu.

According to Shri Madha Bhagawata Mahapurana, Brahma emerged from Vishnu’s navel, Vishnu being is the main source of whatsoever exist in the world; what is created is part of his own body. According to the Puranas, Brahma is self-born in the lotus flower. Another legend says that Brahma was born in water, or from a seed that later became the golden egg, Hiranyagarbha. From this golden egg, Brahma, the Creator was born. The remaining materials of this golden egg expanded into the Brahma or Universe. Being born from a lotus, Brahma is also called as Kanjaja (born from a lotus). There is a story for Sharsa Brahma. Hence the concept of multiple universes as every Brahma creates his Bhramanda (universe) for one Brahma year. Brahma’s wife is Saraswati. Saraswati is also known by names such as Savitri and Gayatri, and has taken different forms throughout history. Brahma is often identified with Prajapati, a Vedic deity. Being the husband of Saraswati or Vaac Devi (the Goddess of Speech), Brahma is also known as “Vaagish,” meaning “Lord of Speech and Sound.” Brahma and Saraswati were depicted on the coins of Vijayanagara rulers. These types of coins were issued by Harihara II and were minted in gold only.

On the obverse of the coin is shown the figures of Lord Brahma and his consort Saraswati as seated in padmasana posture. Brahma has four hands and one of the hands is in abhaya mudra and the other hand holds a ladle, and kalasa. Saraswati holds a vina and pustaka in her hands.

This is a very unique coin containing the two deities Lord Brahma and Saraswathi. Both the god and goddess are seated in padmasana posture.
SARASWATI TYPE

Saraswati, the goddess of learning and fine arts, occupies a place of paramount importance in terms of her popularity and wide appeal amongst the gods and the goddesses of brahmanical pantheon. She is variously known as Vach, Vagdevi, Vagisvari, Vani, Sarada, Bharathi and Vinapani. Literally, Saraswati means “the flowing one. In the Rigveda she represents a river and the deity presiding over it. Hence, she is connected with fertility and purification, a river goddess of importance in the Rigveda period, the concept of Saraswati has undergone considerable changes in the later times. She is now considered to be the goddess of wisdom and science and the mother of the Vedas, the sacred book of the Aryans. She is reflected on the coins of Vijayanagara rulers. This type of coin was issued by Krishnadevaraya. This is a gold coin. On the obverse of the coin goddess Saraswati with crown is shown and her attributes are not clear. Goddess holds an indistinct object in her raised hand. Behind her a peacock is depicted.

LORD VENKATESWARA TYPE

The god Vishnu is one of the most popular deities of the Hindu trinity. The mode of representing the various forms of Vishnu found expression in the various Agamastrastras, of which the most outstanding are the Vaikhanasagama, the Pancharatragama, the Tantrasara of Madvacharya and the VishnuDharmottara. Lord Venkateswara is represented on the coins of Vijayanagara rulers.

Krishnadevaraya was the great ruler among the Vijayanagara rulers. After the conquest of Orissa, he visited Tirupati temple and performed the Kanakabhisheka to Lord Venkateswara and for this purpose, he minted gold coins with portrait of this God on the obverse. That these were not just ordinary coins is proved by the fact that their weight was more than the double of the ordinary standard gold coins. The Venkateswara type of coins of Krishnadevaraya weighs 120 grains against the ordinary gadyanas of 52 grains. That this is not an isolated event is attested to by the fact that other kings Ramaraya, Sri Rangaraya I, Venkatapathiraya I, Venkatapathiraya II, Venkatapathiraya III and Sri Rangaraya III continued this tradition of the Venkateswara type of coins. These types of coins were minted in gold and copper metals.
**Gold coins**

These types of coins were issued by Krishnadevaraya, Ramaraya, Sri Rangaraya I, Venkatapathiraya I, Venkatapathiraya II, Venkatapathiraya III, and Sri Rangaraya III.

Coins of Krishnadevaraya period are shown below.

On the obverse side of the coin is shown Lord Venkateswara standing to front with a tall *kirita* and upper and lower cloth and ornaments. The right back hand holds the *Chakra* and the left the *Sankha*. The right front hand is in the *danamudra* and the left rests on his hip and points to his feet as the place of refuge for all devotees. Above the image of the Lord is an ornamental *torana* or arch with a lion is face at the keystone supported by two *Makaras*. The arch is born by two ornamental star-shaped pillars, the lower parts of which are covered by planks. The God stands on a ground which is supported by a lotus. Sri Rangaraya I, Venkatapathiraya I, Aliya Ramaraya, Venkatapathiraya II, and Sri Rangaraya III also followed this tradition with small variations only. Sri Rangaraya I is coin presented in a figure below.

On the obverse of the coin, Lord Venkateswara is shown standing to the front under an ornamental arch supported by ornamental pillars. This coin is similar to the coins issued by Krishnadevaraya. The Lord Venkateswara is shown standing in *Sampada stanaka* posture under an ornamental arch with ornamental pillars. Venkatapathiraya III was the next ruler who issued the Lord Venkateswara coins.
On the obverse of the coin is shown Lord Venkateswara standing facing, with his consorts Sridevi and Bhudevi\textsuperscript{77} on right and left sides respectively. Sri Rangaraya III coins bear the figure of Lord Venkateswara under an arch\textsuperscript{78} as on the coins of Venkatapatiraya I.

**Copper coins**

These types of coins were issued by Aliya Ramaraya, and Venkatapathiraya II. Ramaraya coin is shown in a circle of dots, Lord Venkateswara\textsuperscript{79} standing facing front. Venkatapathiraya II issued Venkateswara type of coin.

On the obverse of the coin Lord Venkateswara is shown standing to the front, surrounded by dotted circular lines. To the right of the god, a lamp-stand and to the left a flag- post are noticed. The Lord is holding *chakra* and *sankha*\textsuperscript{80} in the right and left hands respectively.

A study of the Venkateswara coins issued by the Aravidu kings reveals that they were staunch *Vaishnavites*. Invariably, on all the coins the figure of Lord Venkateswara is found in a similar posture as standing to the front. The only variations are plain arch, supported by pillars of dots, ornamental arch and pillars. The figures on all the coins are artistically depicted.

**BALAKRISHNA TYPE**

Balakrishna type of coins were issued by Krishandevaraya, Sri Rangaraya I and Venkatapathiraya II. These coins are minted in gold and copper. Making public his favouritism to Vaishnavism, Krishnadevaraya introduced new coins containing the images of *Vaishnava* deities. Soon after Krishnadevaraya brought the image of Krishna from Udayagiri, after its conquest, he minted coins containing the image of divine baby Balakrishna with a conch to his right and discuss to the left on the obverse\textsuperscript{81}. 

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\textsuperscript{77} Sridevi and Bhudevi

\textsuperscript{78} arch

\textsuperscript{79} Lord Venkateswara

\textsuperscript{80} *chakra* and *sankha*

\textsuperscript{81} Balakrishna with a conch to his right and discuss to the left on the obverse
Gold coins

Gold type of coins were issued by Krishnadevaraya.

The figure of Lord Balakrishna is depicted on the obverse of the coin. The Lord Balakrishna is shown in a sitting posture, with the left knee completely bent and slightly raised to facilitate his hand to rest over it; his right leg is also completely bent and placed touching the left leg to enable the deity to sit at ease. The Lord is shown holding a lump of butter in his right hand, whereas, the left hand is shown resting on the left knee. To the left of Lord Balakrishna is sankha and to the right is chakra. The Lord wears various ornaments like ear-rings, a girdle of gingles, armlets, bracelets and anklets.

Another coin shows the Lord Balakrishna in the sitting posture with the right knee bent and resting on the seat, while the left leg is raised up and supporting the arm. The circles of dots are shown around the Lord’s head with sankha and chakra on the left and right respectively. The lord is shown wearing all the usual ornaments. The Lord right hand holds a ball of butter. On another type of coin, the posture of Lord Balakrishna and ornaments are same. The only difference is that the Lord’s head is decorated with a crown of peacock feathers. On some other specimens, the Lord is shown in a tight fitting dress.

On another type of coin, the Lord is shown with additional ornaments like shoulder ornaments, necklace and sacred thread. The hair is shown with curls around the head with a crupa on it. The Lord has sankha and chakra. On other coins, the Lord is shown in sitting posture with the right knee completely bent and resting on the seat. The left leg which is bent is shown kept below the right leg. While the right hand holds a butter ball, the left hand rests on the left knee. The Lord is shown with various ornaments like, ear-rings, girdle of rattles, bracelets, armlets. A circle of dots is shown around the head with sankha to the right and chakra to the left. The Lord Balakrishna motifs on the coins of Krishnadevaraya reflected his love for the Lord Krishna avatars and is regarded as one of
the most comprehensive incarnations ever assumed by the Lord Vishnu. The iconographical features of Lord Krishna are well portrayed on the coins. They are outstanding as pieces of art.

**Copper coins**

Balakrishna type of copper coins were issued by Krishnadevaraya, Sri Rangaraya I and Venkatapathiraya II. Coin issued by Krishnadevaraya is shown below.

On the obverse of the coin is shown Balakrishna is seated on a raised up seat one leg is hanging down at ease. Sri Rangaraya I and Venkatapathiraya II issued dancing Krishna type of coins. On the obverse of the coin dancing Krishna is shown. He holds *chakra* in the right hand, *sankha* in the left hand.

Numerous varieties of the representation of child Krishna (Balakrishna) are noticeable on the coins of Krishnadevaraya, ornamented child Krishna, squatting in different postures, holds a lump of fresh butter (*navanita*) on his right palm. All the figures are fleshy. Several of them, in different types of half-squatting posture, indicate a lithe movement. However, artistic qualities of the representations are not the same on all relevant coins. A wheel and conch are noticeable in the upper field of these coins. The appearance of these two cognizances of Vishnu identifies the figure as representing not only the child Krishna but also Lord Krishna, identifiable with Vishnu.

**SRI RAMA-SITA- LAKSHMANA TYPE**

Sri Rama is one of the ten *avatars* of Lord Vishnu and this *avatara* has come to be looked upon as a human incarnation of Vishnu. The image of Sri Rama, according to silpa texts, should not have more than two hands. He should carry in the right hand *bana* or arrow and in the left hand *dhanus* or the bow. Sri Rama-Sita–Lakshmana figures are represented on the coins of Vijayanagara rulers.
The reign of Tirumalaraya I synchronized with the revival of worshipping Sri Rama in South India. Tirumalaraya varahas bear on the obverse a group which evidently stands for the coronation of Sri Rama with Sita and Lakshmana. These coins give an insight of the revival of Rama worship. In the sphere of Vaishnavite worship, Lord Rama played a vital role in Vijayanagara sculpture. An entire temple, namely, the Hazara Rama temple was dedicated wholly to Lord Rama where profusion of sculptures depicting scenes from Ramayana is found.

Tirumalaraya I changed the deity on his coins, and also he changed the capital to Penukonda after the death of Sadasivaraya. He changed his protecting deity from Virupaksha to Sri Rama; it is evidenced by his coins. His coins contain on the obverse Sri Rama with Sita and Lakshmana. Tirumalaraya I was the originator of the Ramatanki coins which were most popular in South India in Post-Vijayanagara period. Tirumalaraya I issued Lord Rama-Sita and Lakshmana type of gold coins.

On the obverse of the coin is depicted Lord Rama seated on a throne with Goddess Sita on his left thigh with standing Lakshmana behind Rama in an attitude of devotion and he has a bow in his right shoulder. Lord Rama is represented with a tall kirita with his right hand in abhaya mudra symbolizing his hand of benediction and protection.

Tirumalaraya’s varahas bear, on the obverse, a group which evidently stands for the coronation of Sri Ram-Sita and Lakshmana. After the death of Sadasivaraya’s in 1570, Tirumalaraya found it necessary, for military reasons, to make Penukonda his capital. He thus transferred himself and his Empire from the protection of god Virupaksha of Vijayanagara to the care of Lord Ramachandra. Tirumalaraya still invoked on his inscriptions Ganapati, Siva and Vishnu, and had always the old imperial colophon ‘Sri Virupaksha’ in Kannada. Yet owing to the resistance offered by Penukonda to the Moslems combined with the influence of the Sri Vaishnava teachers and possibly the
choice of Rama as the special deity to the emperor, he introduced Rama on the coins. It is likely that the tradition about the Rama-Tankas said to have been minted at the coronation of Rama, may have led to the issue of a large number of new Rama-Tankas on and subsequent to the coronation of his devotee Tirumalaraya. As the reign of Tirumala synchronises with the revival of the worship of Rama in South India under the leadership of the Tatacharya’s, it is reasonable to hold that some of the Rama-tankas of which are worshipped in South India were produced in the days of Tirumala and his successors. But a large number of them, especially those of silver, and alloys, are imitations produced not only in the south but also in the north as is borne out by the Hindi couplet on some of them.

VAISHNAVAITE SYMBOLS

SANKHA AND CHAKRA TYPE

Vishnu possess several ayudhas, but the most important ones are sankha and chakra. Chakra is known as Sudarsana chakra. The sankha and chakra are distinctive Vaishnava symbols. These types of coins, issued by Tirumalaraya I, Sri Rangaraya I, Venkatapatiraya II and Ramadevaraya, were minted in copper only. Tirumalaraya’s I coin is shown below.

On the obverse of the coin is shown, within a ring of dots, a large Sankha to the left and chakra to the right, with crescent moon above and sun below. Venkatapathiraya II was the next ruler who issued sankha and chakra type coins. His coins are similar to the coins of Tirumalaraya I, except lotus-shaped wheel surrounded by a circular line. Ramadevaraya issued sankha and chakra coins.
On the obverse of the coin is shown Sudharsana chakra\textsuperscript{92} surrounded by a dotted circle.

The sanka and Chakra are distinctive Vaishnavite symbols and stand respectively for Vishnu’s terrible discus or chakra named Sudarsana, with flames darting forth from it; and his conch, the sankha Panchajanya, which he took as a trophy from the demon panchajanya and with which he blew his triumphant blast in the hours of battle and of victory. These two emblems passed from the Karnataka Empire to the kingdom of Madura where they appear on the coins of some of the Nayakas. The later kingdom, the chakra appeared so commonly on the coins that a class of them became known as ‘Chakrams’ which are still the most popular copper pieces circulating in that state.

Sri Rangaraya I was the next ruler who issued Vaishnavite parabola symbol. On the obverse of the coin shown parabola Vaishnavite symbol\textsuperscript{93} is noticed. Another coin on the obverse is a Vaishnavite parabola symbol, surrounded by circular lines.

**BOW AND ARROW TYPE**

Sri Rama avatara was the one of the important incarnations of Vishnu. In this avatara, god is in human form and his attributes are bow and arrow. This type of coins were issued by Venkatapathiraya II of the Aravidu dynasty. Coin were minted only in copper metal,

On the obverse of the coin is shown a bow and arrow\textsuperscript{94}. 

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DAGGER TYPE

Tirumalaraya I of the Aravidu dynasty issued dagger type of coins in copper only.

On the obverse of the coin is shown, within a linear circle surrounded by circle of dots, a dagger in the centre with *chakra* to left and *sankha* to right. Another type of coins is shown, within a linear, circle surrounded by circle of dots with a dagger in the centre with a garland around it.

SAIVATE SYMBOL

DAMARUGA TYPE

*Damaruga* is the musical instrument of the Lord Siva.

This type of coins were issued by Venkatapathiraya II of the Aravidu dynasty and were minted in copper metal. On the obverse of the coin is shown a *damaruga* (Siva’s musical instrument), surrounded by a circular line.

ANIMAL MOTIFS

Various animals, ingrained independently, are found on Vijayanagara coins, e.g., tiger, elephant, camel and horse.

TIGER TYPE

This type of coin was issued only by king Harihara I who belonged to Sangama dynasty. It was the influence of the Hoyasalas. The figure of a tiger is found on all the copper plates and coins issued by the Hoyasalas in south India. On the obverse of the coin,
we find a figure of standing tiger with its face turned towards left and foreleg raised; the tail is shown bent upwards; a crescent moon is also seen at the top of the tiger\textsuperscript{99}. The coins of Harihara I with Hanuman and Garuda are known. But this rare coin with the figure of a tiger and the name of the king in Kannada script is generally considered as the first copper coin issued by Harihara I during the early period of his reign. The link between Hoyasala and Vijayanagara coinage, particularly during the periods of Harihara and Bukkaraya, is provided by the coins illustrated\textsuperscript{100}.

**LION TYPE**

Lion can be seen in Vijayanagara art, exactly similar to its prototype of the Vishnukundins, Pallavas and Kadambas. It stands with its right forepaw raised, neck erect, and wide-opened mouth as an ornamental motif. Its tail is curled into a loop as in the case of the lion of the Ramatirtha plates of the Vishnukundins. It is possible that the Vijayanagara emperors carved it on their temples to commemorate the reduction of Kadamba monarch whose name is not mentioned by Marappa. This motif is also depicted on the Vijayanagara coins. These types of coins, issued by Harihara I, Devaraya II and Sadasivaraya, were minted in silver and copper metals.

**Silver coins**

This type of coins were issued by Devaraya II of the Sangama dynasty. On the obverse of the coin is shown a lion moving to left, with its tail curled on its back and forepaw raised, with sword placed horizontally above it. The entire motif is enclosed in two concentric circles\textsuperscript{101}.

**Copper**

Lion type of copper coins issued Harihara I and Sadasivaraya. Harihara I coin on the obverse is shown lion moving to left, crescent moon and sun\textsuperscript{102} above. Sadasivaraya coin is shown lion passant\textsuperscript{103}, to the left.
FISH TYPE

These types of coins were issued by Harihara II and Venkatapathiraya II. These coins were minted in gold and copper.

Gold coins

Harihara II coin on the obverse of the coin is shown two conventionalized fish under conventionalized, canopy. Conch at left side, elephant goad at right side of the fish.

Copper coins

Fish type of copper coin is issued by Venkatapathiraya II of the Aravidu dynasty. On the obverse of the coin is a fish moving to right, surrounded by a dotted circular line.

ELEPHANT TYPE

A gold coin of Devaraya II found in the Srivari hundi (box of offerings) of Tirumala. This coin has, on the obverse, a moving elephant which is caparisoned and ornamented. The reverse has the Nagari legend Pratapa Devaraya. It is difficult to differentiate between the coins of Devaraya I and Devaraya II. Devaraya II had a special fascination for elephants. The credit for introducing the elephant type of coins goes to Devaraya II. “This elephant device appears to have been taken from Ganga Gajapati. The title Gajabentekara is well known. He was interested in elephant hunt as evidenced by phrases like ‘pleased to institute elephant hunt’ etc., in his inscriptions. Many coins show symbols like a wild elephant in a threatening attitude, or a man fighting with the elephant.
Elephant type of coins were issued by Devaraya II, Mallikarjuna, Vijayaraya II, Vira Narasimha, Krishnadevaraya, Achyutaraya, Sadasivaraya and Tirumalaraya I. These coins are minted in gold, silver and copper metals.

**Gold Coins**

Gold type of coins were issued by Devaraya II and Vira Narasimha.

On the obverse of the coin is shown in a linear circle an ornamented Elephant\(^{107}\) moving to left, with an uplifted tail. These features are also reflected on the temple walls of Hazara Rama at Hampi. Vira Narasimha coins are similar to these coins except the figures sun and moon above the field of elephant. The same features are also seen from the temple of Hazara Rama in Hampi.

**Silver coins**

Elephant types of Silver coins are issued by Devaraya II, Mallikarjuna and Tirumalarya I.

Devaraya II coin shows an elephant\(^{108}\) moving left. Mallikarjuna coins are similar to the coins of Devaraya II. Tirumalaraya I coins are similar to the gold coins of Vira Narasimha.
Copper coins

Elephant type of copper coins were issued by Devaraya II, Mallikarjuna, Vijayaraya II, Krishnadevaraya, Achyutaraya, Sadasivaraya and Tirumalaraya I.

On the obverse of the coin, we see in a linear circle surrounded by circle of dots, an elephant carrying a royal sword with sun, moon and Kannada letter “De” above the Elephant.

Mallikarjuna was the next ruler who issued elephant type of coins.

On the obverse of the coin, it is seen in a linear circle, surrounded by circle of dots, an elephant moving to left with uplifted tail, and Kannada single letter Sri above is noticed\textsuperscript{109}. Vijayaraya II was the next ruler who issued this type of coins. The Sankha and Chakra are above the elephant. Krishnadevaraya coins are similar to the coins Mallikarjuna except there is no letter. Achyutaraya was the next ruler who issued elephant type of coins. On the obverse of the coin is an elephant moving to left with dagger is above the elephant\textsuperscript{110}. Sadasivaraya coins are similar to the coins of Krishnadevaraya coins. Tirumalaraya I coins are similar to the coins of Achyutaraya, except there is a dagger in front.

The elephant symbol may have been adopted by the Vijayanagara rulers for it is symbolic of majesty. In the Hindu myths the elephant is the vehicle of Indra known as Airavata, which is declared supreme among elephants by Lord Krishna in the
Bhagavadgita. To the Buddhists, the elephant is symbolic of representing Buddha. To the Jains the elephant is held sacred for it is the Lanchana of the Tirtankara Ajitanatha.  

HORSE TYPE  

In the Rigveda three verses are intended to be recited at asvamedha sacrifice. This sacrifice came to be considered in the Puranas as one of the highest orders though no such merit is ascribed to it in the Vedas. It was, therefore, not inexplicable that this animal continued to Vijayanagara days to be honoured as it was employed not only as an ornament or decoration but was held in genuine reverence. During the Mahanavami festival celebrations, in front of the many state horses during the review, went “a horse with two state umbrellas of the king and with grander decorations that the others and one of the lesser equerries led it by the bridle”. These symbols are also reflected on the coins of Vijayanagara. These types of coins were issued by Achyutaraya, Sadasivaraya, and Sri Rangaraya III and were minted in gold and copper metals.  

Gold coins  

Gold type of coin was issued by Achyutaraya. On the obverse of the coin is depicted prancing horse, to the left. These features are also reflected on the temple walls of Hazara Rama Temple at Hampi.  

Copper  

Copper coins of horse type were issued by Sadasivaraya and Sri Rangaraya III. Sadasivaraya coin represented a fully galloping caparisoned horse, with uplifted tail, to left. In between the hind and forelegs can be seen, hanging tassels of the decorative upholstery. Sri Rangaraya III coin shows a man seated on horse.
VARAHA TYPE

The boar is Adi Varaha, the third incarnation of Lord Vishnu. It was the famous crest of the Chalukyas. It is interesting to find Tirumala Raya reviving the old Chalukyan boar\textsuperscript{115}. The Boar is an incarnation of Lord Vishnu. The coins with the figure of Varaha (Boar) type were issued by Achyutaraya, Tirumalaraya I, Sri Rangaraya I and Sri Rangaraya III. Varaha type of coins are minted in copper only. On Achyutaraya coin the figure of a Boar moving to right and sun and moon above the figure are depicted. A fascinate of Tirumalaraya I coin is presented below.

On the obverse of the coin is shown a varaha or a boar\textsuperscript{116} moving to right with lifted tail and bristle on back standing to end, within a linear circle surrounded by a ring of dots. The boar wears girdle ornaments, and there is a dagger and sun above. These features are also reflected on the temple walls of Hazara Rama at Hampi, except the varaha facing to right. In Sri Rangaraya I coin the varaha is shown moving to right facing a khadga with the sun and the moon\textsuperscript{117} above. Sri Rangaraya III also issued these types of coins.

On the obverse of the coin we see a boar facing to left, in a clearing attitude with bristles of hair on the back\textsuperscript{118}.

Varaha was the Raja-lanchana (State Emblem) of the Vijayanagara kingdom. The emblem was the picture of a varaha facing a sword. The term varahas, along with gadyana, was still used in inscriptions of the Vijayanagara period to describe the coin as pagodas\textsuperscript{119}. 

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PEACOCK TYPE

Peacock type of coins were issued by Sri Rangaraya I, Venkatapathiraya II and Sri Rangaraya III, and were minted in copper only. On the coins of Sri Rangaraya I a man (king?) is shown seated on the peacock. Peacock is facing to right120.

In Venkatapathiraya II coin, a peacock121 is shown facing to right, surrounded by a dotted circular line. Sri Rangaraya III also issued peacock type of coins. On the obverse of the coin, three peacocks122 to right are shown.

CAMEL TYPE

Camel type of coins were issued by Sri Rangaraya III of the Aravidu dynasty and were minted in copper metal.

On the obverse of the coin we see a Camel facing to left with right leg raised123, within a dotted circle is seen. These features are also reflected on the temple walls of Hazara Rama at Hampi.

VAHANAS

According to literature, every deity is associated with some animals to represent its vahana (mount). The deity even when found seated, standing reclining, has been depicted with an animal or human (nara) which serves as its vahana. There are various animals associated with each deity which is also an identifying mark or symbol for the particular icon. The Vahanas are, thus, the symbol of power and movement124.
BULL TYPE

Bull is the guardian of the East and a symbol of royalty right from the earliest Indus cultures. Depicting Bull on the coins was quite popular with the kings of Vijayanagara. The bull is also a much venerated animal and treated as holy. The Saivite temples frequently depict the figures of bull. The bull is known as Nandi vahana of Lord Siva, who is shown, carved along with the bull in the form of Vrishabarudhamurthi. The bull type of coins generally contained a circle of dots within which is found a bull either to left or right with bells hanging from its neck; crescent moon above and a dagger in front are portrayed. The Vijayanagara kings, who belonged to Sangama, Tuluva and Aravidu dynasties, issued a large number of bull type coins in silver and copper metals, except Mallikarjuna all Vijayanagara rulers issued coins in copper.

Silver

Bull type of Silver coin was issued by Mallikarjuna. On the obverse of the coin is shown, in a linear circle, a fine humped bull moving to left, with Sun and Moon above.

Copper

Bull type of copper coins were issued by Harihara I, Bukkaraya I, Harihara II, Bukkaraya II, Devaraya I, Ramachandra, Vijayaraya I, Krishnadevaraya, Sadasivaraya, Aliya Ramaraya, Tirumalaraya I, Sri Rangaraya I, Venkatapathiraya II, Sri Rangaraya II and Sri Rangaraya III.
Harihara I bull type of coins were issued with small variations. In the first type, on the obverse of the coin is shown a fine humped bull facing to right, stylised conch in front of the bull, and above the bull Kannada single letter ‘Ha’ is noticed. In the second type of coin, on the obverse is shown highly ornamented bull facing to left, Sun and Moon above, and a lamp-stand in front of the bull. Coins issued by Bukkaraya I resemble to second type of coins issued by Harihara I.

On the Harihara II coin, is shown within a circle of dots the figure of the fine humped bull is shown moving to left with bells hanging from its neck, crescent moon above and the dagger in front. Bukkaraya II coins are similar to those of Harihara II. He continued the tradition of Harihara II in having bull on his coins. Devaraya I issued bull type of coins with small variations.

In the first type, on the obverse of the coin a fine humped bull is depicted moving to the left with crescent Moon and Sun above in it a circle of dots with no dagger. Some specimens have the Nagari letter ‘De’ in-front of the bull. Perhaps, it represents the name of the king Devaraya I. The second type of coin is similar to the coins of Harihara II.

Ramachandra and Vijayaraya coins are similar to the coins of Harihara’s second type, except bull moving to left.

Krishnadevaraya coins are more similar to the Devaraya’s bull type of coins. On the obverse of the coin, in a circle of dots a fine bull is depicted standing to the left with
ornamental covering cloth on its back, secured by a girdle. On its neck there are folds of fat and gingle on the throat. The Sun and the Moon are shown above the bull\textsuperscript{133}. Sadasivaraya coins are similar to the coins of Vijayaraya I, except the bull moving to left and there is no sun and moon, and dagger\textsuperscript{134}. Aliya Ramaraya coin shows a seated bull under an arch\textsuperscript{135}. Tirumalaraya I coins are similar to the coins of Vijayaraya I, except the bull is shown within two borders of dotted circle surrounded by linear circle\textsuperscript{136}. Sri Rangaraya II coins are similar to the coins of Tirumalaraya I, except there is no dagger, sun and moon\textsuperscript{137}. Venkatapathiraya II also issued bull type of coins.

On the obverse of the coin is shown, within a linear double circular lines a bull moving to left with uplifted tail\textsuperscript{138}. Sri Rangaraya II coins are similar to the coins of Tirumalaraya I. Sri Rangaraya III issued similar type of coins.

The presence of a bull on Vijayanagara coins shows the prevalence of Saivism. The Saivites attach great importance to this emblem for it is the \textit{vahana}, vehicle of Lord Siva. \textit{Vrishabha} symbolized the very essence of energy and represents the Great god Siva\textsuperscript{139}. The crescent moon stands for Siva, as \textit{Chandrasekhara}, who wears crescent in his \textit{jatamakuta}\textsuperscript{140}. The Sun and the Moon are sometimes reproduced as symbols of eternal duration and the success of the empire. The above study shows that the Sangama dynasty rulers were mostly followers of \textit{Saivism}. Whereas, the Tuluva and Aravidu dynasties were staunch followers of \textit{Vaishnavism} but they also patronized \textit{Saivism}. This study shows the religious tolerance of the Vijayanagara rulers.

**GARUDA TYPE**

The word ‘\textit{Garuda}’ has been derived from the root \textit{gri} which means, “To Swallow”. There is a popular belief that the Garuda possesses a mystic power against the fatal poison of the serpent. At Puri, persons suffering from snake-bite are taken to the main
hall of the temple, where they embrace a Garuda pillar. Garuda is represented generally, with wings, human arms, vulture legs, and a curved beak-like nose.

Garuda is the vehicle of Lord Vishnu and is very frequently introduced into the picture of the Vaishnavas carrying the deity with or without Lakshmi. He is often depicted as half-bird and half-man. He is generally placed opposite to the shrines of the main deities or at the corners of the parapet walls of Vishnu temples. Presence of Garuda symbol on Krishnadevaraya coins reflects the predominance of Vaishnavism. Hanuman was the first feature of the Vijayanagara Empire. Later issues of the capital feature Garuda in much the same post. This is particularly noticeable on coins dating from the time of Krishnadevaraya, who replaced the small silver tars with large copper issues depicting Garuda. The choice of Garuda could have been made because he was also associated with unstinting bravery and service to God as the vehicle of Vishnu. However, he had also become a symbol of the empire for the area. Having first been used by the Guptas, this image then became linked to the dominant polity of the Western Deccan, being appropriated by the Rastrakutas and then the Kalachuris of Kalyani. The use of Garuda on the coins of the Vijayanagara heartlands signalled that they were, indeed, the masters of this region. This image became very popular in the South, appearing on many coins of the successor states. Later, Garuda coins showed him in anjalimudra, signifying respect for his Lord Vishnu, or perhaps for the issuer of the coin as representative of this god on earth. In Sri Krishnadevaraya gold coins, Lord Krishna took the place of Uma-Maheswara. On the copper coin issues Siva’s mount, the bull, gave place to Vishnu’s mount Garuda. This change is only indicative of the personal devotion of the emperor, for there is clear evidence in epigraphy to show that the state continued to patronize the worship of other deities also. As declared adherent of the Sri Vaishnava faith and under the influence of his advisers of that sect, the emperor, perhaps, found it necessary to substitute Vishnu for Uma-Maheswara, the patron deity of the empire in its earlier days.

Garuda has been a popular deity on the coins of Vijayanagara rulers in particular. The Garuda figure was first portrayed by Harihara I, Harihara II, Devaraya I, Sri Krishnadevaraya, Sadasivaraya, Tirumalaraya I, Ramaraya Venkatadri, Sri Rangaraya I and Venkatapatiraya II.
Gold coins

These types of coins were issued by Bukkaraya I, Harihara II and Venkatapathiraya II. Bukkaraya I coin shows the rude kneeling figure of Garuda facing to the right. Harihara II coins are similar to the coins of Bukkaraya I.

Venkatapathiraya II coin shows humanoid Garuda kneeling to left, in a virasana posture. Hands joined together and placed on the chest in an attitude of devotion with, conch and discus on either side of the head.

Copper coins

These types of coins were issued by Harihara I, Devaraya I and Krishnadevaraya. Harihara I coin shows Garuda moving to right with two hands folded at the chest, in an attitude of devotion. Devaraya I coin shows Garuda facing to front in anjalimudra, Sanka and chakra on the either side. There are small variations on the coins issued by Krishnadevaraya.

On the obverse of the coin, is shown the figure of Garuda is depicted to the right, with a big face and a tall kirita. His hands are joined in anjali posture. The left foot of Garuda is on the ground in the heroic posture or virasana. The right knee is shown in the
kneeling posture. Small wings are spread out behind the arms while the fillet and the waist clothes are flying in the air. The whole figure is depicted in a circle of closely linked dots. This coin depicts Garuda\textsuperscript{150} in motion.

**Second type**

On the obverse of the coin is shown in a circle of dots, anthropoid kite or Garuda to left. With beaked face, wearing tall *kirita* with two fillets, hands joined on chest in the attitude of devotion (*anjali* posture). Garuda kneels on his knee with the right foot on the ground in the *virasana*\textsuperscript{151} or heroic posture. Small wings are spread out behind the arms and the fillets and waist cloth are flying in air. *Sankha* and *chakra* are in the field besides the head. These features are also reflected on the temple walls of Venkataramana temple at Tadipatri.

Achyutaraya was the next ruler who issued garuda type of coins with small variation.

**First type**

On the obverse of the coin is Garuda seated in *padmasana* posture\textsuperscript{152}.

**Second type**
On the obverse of the coin is Garuda kneeling to left, in virasana posture. Sadasivaraya coins are similar to Krishnadevaraya second type of coin. Tirumalaraya I of the Aravidu dynasty issued garuda type of coins with small variations.

First type

On the obverse of the coin is shown, within a circle of dots, Garuda kneeling to the left with dagger in front and sankha and chakra on both sides of his head. The figure is inscribed in a ring of dots.

Second type

On the obverse of the coin is shown, in a linear circle, two Garudas facing each other with a dagger in the centre string of dots under a line in the field below. Ramaraya Venkatadri coin Garuda is shown without kirita, its head looks like a tuft of hair at the back. Sri Rangaraya I coins are similar to the Achyutaraya’s first type of coins. Venkatapathiraya III issued garuda type of coins with small variations. First type of coin is similar to the coins of Achyutaraya’s second type of coins.

Second type

On the obverse of the coin is shown seated Garuda, with face turned to left. Left hand is on left lap and right hand is raised.
GANDABERUNDA TYPE

The double headed eagle is a very ancient and well known symbol of royalty throughout the world. It might have taken its birth in the Indus valley of the Copper Age or in early Mesopotamia along with the Sphinx and the Gryphon and spread westward to Europe and even central America and south eastward to South India. Numerous Indian dynasties had it as their crest or banner. It appears to have descended through the Chalukyas and the Hoyasalas to the Vijayanagara kings from whom Madura and Ikkeri and, later on, Mysore inherited it. In contemporary India, it is the banner and crest of the kings of Mysore.\textsuperscript{157}

Marshall traces the origin of the double headed eagle which occurs for the first time in Hittite sculptures in Western Asia. It is also found on an early ivory of the Geometric period from Sparta and that later it was introduced in Taxila by the Scythians. From them it was drafted into the Russian imperial arms and those of Germany. From Taxila it found its way to Vijayanagar and Ceylon.\textsuperscript{158}

In India the earliest representation of Gandaberunda was first seen at Taxila\textsuperscript{159} and later at Sanchi on its bas-reliefs which are ascribed to circa second century B.C.

The Gandaberunda is mentioned as a bird in the Panchatantra.\textsuperscript{160} The term Gandaberunda in no time became an honour of kings, distinguished rivals, feudatories and generals among the Ikshvakus, Chalukyas, Kadambas, Kalachuris and Hoyasalas.\textsuperscript{161}

As successors to the Hoyasalas, the Vijayanagara emperors continued to use this title and like the Varaha formed their royal crest.\textsuperscript{162} The Gandaberunda or double headed eagle is variously portrayed on Achyutaraya’s coin. Gandaberunda type of coins were issued by Achyutaraya and Sadasivaraya of Tuluva dynasty, Sri Rangaraya I of Aravidu dynasty.

**Gold coins**

Achyutaraya introduced Gandaberunda type of coins in gold. The Gandaberunda or double headed eagle is variously portrayed on his coins. The real significance of the Gandaberunda motif was supremacy and supreme strength of the Vijayanagara Empire.
On the obverse of the coin is shown the back view of Gandaberunda\(^{163}\) flying up wards. It is wearing an ornament. The wings and feathers are ornamented and the head has a crest. The huge bird is flying up-wards carrying in each of its two beaks and two claws a fully grown tusker elephant, evidently for feeding upon. The bird wears necklaces and rings on its necks and the elephants trumpet in desperate terror with their uplifted tail and trunk.

**Copper coins**

Gandaberunda type of copper coins was issued by Achyutaraya, Sadasivaraya and Sri Rangaraya I.

Achyutaraya coin shows Gandaberunda flying upwards. The bird is carrying in each one of its two beaks and two claws a full grown elephant\(^{164}\). On Sadasivaraya coins, Gandaberunda is seen, standing to left\(^{165}\). Sri Rangaraya I coins are similar to the copper coins of Achyutaraya\(^{166}\).
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